

A Work Project, presented as part of the requirements for the Award of a
Master Degree in Management from the NOVA School of Business and Economics.

ONLINE CONSUMER BEHAVIOR:
**A SOCIAL MEDIA PERSPECTIVE HIGHLIGHTING THE CONSUMER
ENGAGEMENT WITH THE FASHION INDUSTRY ON INSTAGRAM**

ANTONIA SCHNEIDER – 2718

A Project carried out on the Master in Management Program, under the supervision of:

Prof. Luis F. Martinez

05.12.2016

Abstract

The objective of this study is to investigate the effects on consumer engagement with the fashion industry, resulting from the planned changes in Instagram's service to businesses, from offering sole branding opportunities to allowing brand feeds to turn into sales acquisition channels. Through literary– and empirical research tendencies that consumers' cognition and affect are prone to change on all three engagement levels of the CEBSC model were identified. Key finding of this study is that the industry's demand for an improved customer journey on the social network, diverges from the overall private user's demand to rather explore than shop. Nevertheless, very fashion loyal consumers are likely to appreciate a seamless shopping experience. Further research should therefore focus on these specific consumer segments in order to identify their exact behavioral deviation. As a solution to the diverging demand this study suggests that Instagram provides users with the option of opting-out from its shopping service, in order to maintain potential consumers closely in their purchase decision-making process, while not scaring regular Social Media users away.

Keywords: Online Consumer Behavior, Social Media Marketing, Social Media Brand Engagement, Online Brand Cognition, Online Brand Affect

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervising professor, Luis Martinez, for giving very constructive feedback and guidance throughout the entire process of writing the master thesis. Further, my parents' encouragement and financial support were invaluable for the successful completion of my studies. Lastly, I am particularly grateful for the assistance given by Stephan Sattler, who offered several times to proof read this paper and who gave valuable advice and encouragement whenever the work seemed extremely challenging.

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1. Introduction

Cognitive and affective consumer engagement receive continuous attention in the field of consumer behavior, consumer decision making and related marketing research (Hollebeek, 2011; Hoyer et al., 2013; Solomon, 2015; Calder et al., 2016). With a growing e-commerce sector and unexplored potentials of the online market, brands open up for new opportunities to engage with their customers online through their personal web shops, as well as through social networking sites (SNS). The main new potential of these networks lies in the interactive and two-sided relationship between a brand and its customers or its respective industry community. Especially large SNS, such as Facebook and Twitter, have been used for marketing purposes in order to engage with potential customers and to turn them into loyal followers (Ashman et al., 2015; Schivinski et al., 2016). These SNS offer instant sales opportunities, as posted content allows direct connections via web-links to the retailers' web shops, potentially converting into measurable sales (Xiang, 2016).

Previous studies suggest that different industries show diverse levels of user engagement expressed on a variety of SNS (Erkan, 2015; Dessart et al., 2015). In this particular case, the focus is set on Instagram and the fashion industry, where visual communication and community spirit impact consumer behavior largely (Solomon, 2015) and respective brand presence on the social network is well developed (Vivek et al., 2014; Chaykowski, 2016). Instagram, being the biggest SNS, offering sole visual communication to its users, plays a large role not only as a marketing channel, but also as an inspirational resource for designers and the entire fashion community (Adegeest, 2016). Currently, scales to measure consumer engagement on SNS are not yet well established. This is why especially non-academic research shows inconsistency in defining user engagement (Elliot, 2014; Media Industry Newsletter, 2016). Also, in academic research different measures have been applied, mainly taking a holistic view on the topic in terms of the observed industries and social media, comparing users' "liking"-behavior or cognition and affect towards

brands (Erkan, 2015; Dessart et al., 2015). This study uses the Consumer's Engagement with Brand-Related Social-Media Content (CEBSC) model, in order to observe consumer engagement and to further validate its applicability to Instagram. The three engagement stages of the CEBSC model, consumption, contribution and creation, were contemplated during the conducted empirical research of this report (Schivinski, 2016), while also observing consumers' cognition and affect (Hollebeek, 2011).

The objective of this study is to investigate the effects on consumers' engagement with the fashion industry, resulting from the planned changes in Instagram's design, from offering sole branding opportunities to businesses, into allowing brands' Instagram profiles to turn into sales acquisition channels. In order to make a comparison, at first stage the effects on consumers' cognition and affect through engagement with fashion related Instagram content were highlighted in the context of the CEBSC model. Based on these findings, an evaluation of possible engagement changes in the given scenario was taken. Respective data was then collected via an online survey. The questionnaire was distributed through several SNS to a random sample group. Out of the participants, Instagram users were identified, in order to assure meaningful and relevant data. In terms of industry focus, a broad fashion industry approach has been taken, with no specific attention to any certain brand or segment.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Instagram and the Online Fashion Community

Instagram was founded in 2010 and subsequently acquired by Facebook in 2012. Its point of difference from other SNS is that it focuses solely on visual communication providing its service mainly via an App for mobile devices. Users can capture any kind of moment by taking a picture/video, applying adjustments through filter options and sharing them with their community.

Additionally, it is possible to add a location and subtitle, which also may include hashtags, enabling the reach of a broad anonymous target group. Follower and non-follower have the option to simply visualize the published content or additionally like, comment and/or share it; as long as the user profile is not set to private and therefore limited to a personal user network. However, it is not possible to include web-links in the footnotes of a post, but only in the profile title section (Faßmann and Moss, 2016). Furthermore, it is possible to connect an Instagram profile with other SNS, such as Facebook or Tumblr, permitting an even bigger audience. The usage of the App is considered to be very easy, which largely contributes to the platform's immense success (Chaykovsky, 2016).

As previously mentioned, Instagram provides its service primarily via mobile App and therefore the growing importance of mobile consumption is likely to have an impact on the users' behavior (Vorderer et al., 2016). This change in behavior is also visible in the collected data of this report, where 58.4%¹ of the respondents transmitted their input via mobile device. Instagram understood the momentum of the mobile age, which companies like Google describe as a fragmentation of attention into micro-moments. These continuously occurring moments create a demand towards brands to respond to consumer needs instantly and in real-time (Google Inc., 2016). Data provided by Instagram to Forbs Magazine in August 2016 states the platform currently has a user base of more than 500 Million people, who are sharing 95 Million uploads per day. On average, these users spend more than 21 minutes in the App on a daily basis, which the company describes as a very sticky user engagement. Further, smartphone users spend one out of every five minutes on their devices using the social networks Facebook and Instagram (Chaykovsky, 2016).

¹ The complete survey data is accessible in the Annex.

Previous research explored the motivation of people to use Instagram and discovered that main reasons are: social interaction, archiving, self-expression, escapism, and peeking (Lee et al., 2015). The intrinsic motives of using Instagram do not specifically include engagement with fashion brands or the fashion industry, but still this kind of interaction happens on a large scale. Vogue Germany (2016) considers Instagram to be the most important branding tool for the fashion industry. The emergence of the internet gave global brands better access to their consumers, leading to a presence of over 50% of the top 100 global brands in online brand communities (Manchada et al., 2012). As fashion is a part of self-expression, which is a key motive for using Instagram (Lee et al., 2015; Sierra, 2015), the visual communication allows brands, models, designers, influencers and fashion magazines to show their community exactly who they are (Vogue Germany, 2016). Members of this community, including regular Instagram users, post their look books, snap shots of outfits, street styles, and comment on, or like the ones of others. The content generated by the mass, inspires the fashion industry and consumers, while it promotes fashion brands and their latest collections and products (Adegeest, 2016). Most of the fashion items displayed on visual SNS can be considered hedonic products and Instagram serves as an aspirational discovery platform for these (Irani and Hanzae, 2011).

The key of using the full potential of Instagram from a business perspective has so far been by interacting and connecting with users of a certain community, relevant to the company's brand, as no direct path to commerce had been in place prior. One main objective of brands at first stage has been to either generate a critical mass of followers to their brand's profile or to create visibility for the brand's products through influencer marketing (Faßmann and Moss, 2016). As display advertising has not been very successful on Instagram or any other SNS (Lin and Kim, 2016), it is important for brands that user follow them by choice. This may explain why user engagement has been observed to be higher on Instagram than on other SNS, because the generated content aims

mainly to be visually appealing, in order to satisfy the community (Frier, 2016). The research and advisory firm Forrester Inc. discovered in 2014 in a report on user-brand engagement on SNS, that engagement rates per follower were 58 times higher on Instagram than on Facebook and 120 times higher than on Twitter (Elliot, 2014). Other sources support these findings, with less distinctive, but still clear values in favor of the platform's success (Media Industry Newsletter, 2016). This data has to be observed critically, as criteria to measure engagement are not always clear in the published reports and are often divergent from one study to another.

By launching a new service of shoppable Instagram pictures in October 2016, Instagram responded to the industry's growing demand to acquire customers directly through the platform. Previously, third party providers did offer work-around services to facilitate the customer acquisition on the network. Newsletter options such as "like2know.it" have been trying to capture consumers at the peak of their interest and facilitate their customer journey to purchase (rewardStyle Inc., 2016). In the test phase of its new service, Instagram has chosen to cooperate with 20 US-based retail brands, mainly from the fashion industry. These brands will have the opportunity to display a "tap to view" icon on their posts, allowing consumers to open a tag with information on up to five displayed products, such as price or product details. By tapping on the tag of the desired product, the consumer will be transferred to a product page on the retailer's web shop. This direct connection to the sales channel of the brands and retailers will ease the decision making process during the customer journey essentially. Future adjustments of this service may include also an option to save product pages on Instagram as a reminder, in case a user wants to reconsider the purchase options over time (Instagram INC, 2016).

The way that Instagram is cautiously testing this feature with only 20 brands and providing the service only on iOS devices in the United States shows that changes in the platform's usability are a delicate matter. Instagram stated that their objective will be to provide a seamless shopping

experience to its users; meaning both businesses and individuals (Instagram INC, 2016). James Quarles, Instagram's vice president for monetization, stated that the company has closely watched other SNS' challenges with sales acquisition and learned from these, as failure in the industry has been a common thing (Frier, 2016).

2.2. Consumer Engagement

The framework of consumer engagement lies in the context of attitude formation, consumer decision-making and consequently consumer behavior. Attitude formation can be seen as part of the psychological core of human beings. The process of high-effort attitude formation, taking place when considering the purchase of a hedonic good, is subdivided into cognitive- and affective foundations of attitude. The *cognitive foundations of attitude* formation consist of an analytical process, structuring the reasoning by analogy and category, influencing the output through direct or imagined experiences and values. An external influence on this process can be the source or medium of the evaluated information (Hoyer et al., 2013). Cognition drives users into drawing their attention towards brands, through the use and absorption of SNS (Dessart et al., 2015). The *affective foundation of attitude* formation is an emotional process resulting into an enduring emotional experience or relationship, by engaging with a certain event or subject (Hoyer et al., 2012; Bodur et al., 2000); in the case of this study a fashion brand or a brand's community. Examples of emotionally driven experiences can be enthusiasm and enjoyment fostered through social media brand community interaction (Dessart et al., 2015). Beyond these examples, basically any trigger of emotional reactions could serve as the basis of an affective impact. Just as with cognitive attitude formation, the source or medium of information serve as external factors to influence the output of the attitude formation (Hoyer et al., 2013).

Cognition and affect also play a large role in decision-making processes (Hoyer et al., 2015; Solomon, 2016). *Cognitive decision-making* can be described as deliberate, rational, and sequential (Solomon, 2016); a process in which items of information about attributes are combined by the consumer in order to form a well evaluated decision (Hoyer et al., 2015). *Affective decision-making* considers the fact that human beings are never absolutely rational and many times are led by emotions, which cause for example instantaneous reactions (Solomon, 2016).

In the context of decision making it is interesting to observe which of these components may have a higher impact on attitudes. In fact several variations of hierarchies of effect exist. Cognition can be described as the basic engagement in the setting of a *standard learning hierarchy*, where affect describes a sequential, deeper level of engagement, resulting into a certain behavior. In the scenario described by the *experiential hierarchy*, the affect causes a certain behavior, which results into cognition. Further, in a *low-involvement hierarchy* behavior causes an affect, leading into cognition (Solomon, 2015).

Previous academic research observed that attention and absorption are variations of cognitive attitudes expressed by consumers engaging with social media. The users' *attention* to a brand and its products has to be given voluntarily and requires a conscious decision on investing time into interacting with such, on a SNS. *Absorption* defines a stronger cognitive attitude, to the extent of users describing difficulty to detach from the medium, up to the point of placing rules upon themselves to prevent them from drifting into procrastination (Dessart et al., 2015). Affective attitudes are described to be mainly expressed through enthusiasm and enjoyment. *Enthusiasm* can be articulated by repetitive interaction with the same brands or fashion community members, through commenting, liking and sharing the branded content. If these actions of continuous engagement lead to a satisfactory feeling, such as happiness or pleasure, the affective attitude is expressed through *enjoyment* (Dessart et al., 2015).

In the setting of consumer attitude formation towards brands on Instagram, the engagement can be scaled into three stages, according to the CEBSC model: consumption, contribution and creation. *Consumption* describes the consumer behavior of observing branded content published on the platform. If the content did catch a user's attention, *contribution* may take place by active interactions such as following, liking, or commenting on branded posts or business profiles. *Creation* takes place, when users publish their own brand related content (Schivinski et al., 2016). Cognition and affect towards brands and respective products/services can be expressed during all of these three stages. Previous studies mainly took a holistic approach in terms of industries and SNS, when observing consumer engagement (Chen et al., 2015; Dessart et al., 2015; Schivinski et al., 2016). The role of Instagram has been given very little attention in academic research so far, although the platform plays a significant part in today's social media marketing. In order to observe how user engagement may change, with the introduction of a shoppable Instagram feed, the previously described stages of engagement were ought to be confirmed as existent in the sample of the carried out empirical research.

3. Methodology

In order to build upon the extensively carried out literature investigation, an online survey was designed to collect meaningful empirical research data. The questionnaire was distributed to a random audience between October 22, 2016 and November 21, 2016. 190 responses were collected, out of which 154 were relevant for the analysis, since the respondents stated to be active Instagram users. Out of this group 87% have had an active user profile for more than one year and open the App at least once a day. The level of experience in using the App is therefore considered to be high. The responding audience represents a sample of individuals with a diverse background of nationalities; the largest groups being nationals from Germany, Portugal and the United States

of America.² The total group comprised out of 108 females and 46 males, with 80.5% being aged between 19 and 28 years.

Table 1. Sample Characteristics

Data in % with n=154						
Age range in years	.6%	26.6%	53.9%	10.4%	8.4%	
	≤18	19-23	24-28	29-33	≥34	
Gender						
Male			29.9%			
Female			70.1%			
Other SNS Profiles	97.4%	63.6%	59.1%	48.1%	29.2%	18.2%
	Facebook	LinkedIn	YouTube	Snapchat	Pinterest	Twitter
Instagram usage						
Opening frequency	12.3%	13%	26%	21.4%	10.4%	16.9%
	< daily	daily	2-4 times	5-7 times	8-10 times	>10 times
Uploads frequency	8.4%	28.6%	33.8%	15.6%	11%	2.5%
	never	monthly	2-3 p.m.	weekly	2-3 p.w.	daily
Followers, <i>M</i> (min-max)			411 (2-15,000)			
Following, <i>M</i> (min-max)			290 (1-2,500)			
Occupation	57.8%	35.7%	4.5%	1.9%		
	student	employee	self-employed	unemployed		
Net Income in € p.m.	25.3%	34.7%	12%	11.3%	16.7%	
	<500	500-1000	1001-1500	1501-2000	>2001	
Fashion Spending in € p.m.	30.5%	37.7%	16.2%	12.3%	3.1%	
	<50	50-100	101-150	151-200	>201	

The sample group's daily interaction with the App is on average 4.99 times per day, with an average upload of 3.98 pictures/videos per month. These figures reflect to a certain extent the sticky user engagement described by Instagram itself. Displayed in Table 1, the data shows a large standard deviation given that the sample size, with respect to the overall 500 Million active Instagram users (Chaykowsky, 2016), is very small and diverse. The same can also be observed in the sample group's follower/following numbers. On average the respondents have 411 followers

² A complete list of nationalities is available in the Annex.

($SD=1372$) and follow 292 Instagram profiles ($SD=327$) themselves. The means' qualities are not necessarily relevant in order to draw conclusions in this specific case, as the data can still reflect the sample group's existing cognition and affect towards the fashion industry on Instagram at the different engagement stages of the CEBSC model and possible changes caused by the introduction of the shoppable Instagram feed (Dessart et al., 2015; Schivinski et al., 2016).

The questionnaire was absolutely anonymous and pointed out that no given answer could be perceived as correct or wrong. Nevertheless, social acceptance mechanisms are likely to have affected the respondents' reactions to the asked questions (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 1998). Especially, as it is known that reasons to use Instagram are mainly social interaction and self-expression in public display (Lee et al., 2015). This has to be kept in mind when drawing conclusions from research data.

Table 2. Different Interest Groups of Instagram Users (n=154)

Grouped by # of respondents and in %			
Fashion Follower	#95 (61.7%)	Fashion 1 (following Brands/Blogger)	#44 (28.6%)
		Fashion 2 (following only Brands)	#30 (19.5%)
		Fashion 3 (following only Blogger)	#21 (13.6%)
Non-Fashion Follower	#59 (38.3%)		

The collected data was split into two main user groups, one being engaged with the fashion community (Fashion Follower) and the other serving as a comparison group with no engagement with fashion content (Non-Fashion Follower) on Instagram. In order to observe general user engagement with fashion content on Instagram, these two user groups would be sufficient to perform t-test analysis, where $H_0: \mu = \mu_0$ or $H_a: \mu \neq \mu_0$ and $p=.05$. However, for the main research objective, a profound observation of the fashion community was carried out, by further segmenting the Fashion group into three subgroups displayed in Table 2. By performing single

factor ANOVA the expected change in engagement behavior of the fashion community was analyzed. As σ of the total sample group is unknown, but $n > 100$, a normal probability distribution is expected. (Newbold et al., 2013).

In the survey's sections, designed to observe the current user engagement with the App and the published content, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each of the statements using a 5-point Likert scale anchored by "never" and "very often". The section trying to provide an outlook on how consumers are going to react upon the occurring changes in the platform design also used a 5-point Likert scale, anchoring the level of agreement by the statements "very unlikely" and "very likely" (Saunders et al, 2012). The data evaluation aims to provide a behavioral outlook beyond the observations of the test phase of the new shoppable Instagram feed. It is expected that customer and industry demand for an easy purchasing process through the App differ, as private users' interest in the platform has no direct relation to commercial intentions.

4. Empirical Results and Research Conclusions

As the objective of this study is to investigate the effects on consumer engagement with the fashion industry resulting from the planned changes in Instagram's offered business services. Therefore, at first stage the sample's engagement with the fashion community on Instagram has been observed.

Due to the design of the questionnaire it was visible that the sample expressed *cognition* in the engagement stages of consumption and contribution, where users give their attention to fashion brands or other members of the fashion community by actively opting-in on following a brand or fashion influencer. According to literary research, cognition can also be present at the stage of creation, where absorption leads consumers into dedicating a large share of their time to generating fashion brand related content (Dessart et al., 2015; Schivinski et al., 2016). An indicator in the

survey data for the existence of this kind of creation engagement is that 61.7% of the respondents stated their friends post fashion related content.

Further, the sample expressed its *affect* towards the industry mainly during the stages of contribution and creation; when users not only observe content, but also like, comment and share it with their community, or even create their own content in order to publicly display their affect for a certain branded product. Again, based on previous studies, affect could also take place in the form of enjoyment while browsing the Instagram feed of suggested content at the stage of consumption (Dessart et al., 2015; Schivinski et al., 2016). The collected data in combination with the extensively carried out literature research, confirms both cognitive and affective user engagement on the three different engagement stages of the CBESC model. Further, the users' engagement is observed at each of the levels separately and in detail.

Consumption. The survey data regarding the users' opening frequency, listed in Table 1, visualizes the repetitive user engagement with the App at the consumption level, allowing an active mental state for cognitively processing branded content displayed by the fashion community, while out of affect repeating this action several times throughout a day.

Contribution. The fact that users have to opt-in on interaction with the fashion community, by following brands or fashion influencers, visualizes the cognitive element of engaging with the industry through the App on a contributive level. The users' attention to brands and their respective products has to be given voluntarily, creating a favorable mindset of the user. Reaching a cognitive point of absorption contributes to successful brand profiles, as exposure to a brand's fashion items on a regular basis increases the brand's visibility to the consumers (Dessart et al., 2015). The survey data revealed that Fashion Follower and Non-Fashion Follower, defined in Table 2, show a different intensity of contributive engagement towards the fashion community and their personal social network, as displayed in Table 3. The intensity of contributive engagement with the fashion

industry is nevertheless low, as on average Fashion Follower express to like or comment on content rarely. The fairly high standard deviation expresses that bonds to the industry are of varying intensity, such as overall social bonds in the Non-Fashion group.

Table 3. Contributive Consumer Engagement on Average

Scale: (1) never, (2) rarely, (3) sometimes, (4) often, (5) very often				
	Fashion		Non-Fashion	
I like or comment on pictures of my friends:	<i>M</i> =4.2	<i>SD</i> =,9	<i>M</i> =3.5	<i>SD</i> =1.4
I like or comment on pictures of famous people:	<i>M</i> =2.2	<i>SD</i> =1.2	<i>M</i> =1.6	<i>SD</i> =1.0
I like or comment on pictures posted by fashion bloggers:	<i>M</i> =2.2	<i>SD</i> =1.5	<i>M</i> =1.1	<i>SD</i> =0.2
I like or comment on pictures posted by fashion brands:	<i>M</i> =2.0	<i>SD</i> =1.3	<i>M</i> =1.1	<i>SD</i> =1.1

Further, the survey data revealed that the Fashion Follower experience somewhat affective emotions when engaging with the fashion industry through contribution, as displayed in Table 4. The same kind of expressed enjoyment ($M=2.5$) and excitement ($M=3.1$) for fashion community content is slightly higher, when only the data of group Fashion 1, from Table 2, is observed. As this group follows both fashion brands and fashion bloggers, a higher commitment to the industry and interest in fashion can be expected. In order to get a clear image on affective consumer engagement with the fashion industry, Fashion Follower and Non-Fashion Follower have been asked to state their level of enjoyment of interacting with their personal network of friends, as well as with the fashion community. Comparing the two sample groups, affect towards the fashion industry was unsurprisingly higher in the Fashion Follower group. The fact that Non-Fashion Follower expressed also lower affect when engaging with their personal network of friends was rather unexpected.

Table 4. Average Consumer Affect Fostered through Engagement on Instagram

Scale: (1) never, (2) rarely, (3) sometimes, (4) often, (5) very often				
	Fashion		Non-Fashion	
I enjoy to interact with my friends on Instagram:	<i>M</i> =3.7	<i>SD</i> =1.2	<i>M</i> =3.3	<i>SD</i> =1.3
I enjoy to interact with the fashion community on Instagram:	<i>M</i> =2.3	<i>SD</i> =1.5	<i>M</i> =1.1	<i>SD</i> =0.1
I feel happy when I receive likes on Instagram:	<i>M</i> =4.0	<i>SD</i> =1.1	<i>M</i> =3.8	<i>SD</i> =1.3
I get excited about receiving a response on my posts from the fashion community on Instagram:	<i>M</i> =2.8	<i>SD</i> =2.3	<i>M</i> =1.7	<i>SD</i> =1.5

Creation. The most effort involving engagement stage of creation has only been observed on a superficial level, by asking the respondents if their personal network published fashion related content. As content generation has no clear pattern, insights to this stage need to be explored through qualitative research. The fact that some respondents stated to get excited about receiving responses by the fashion community to their fashion related publications, gives a hint on their participation at this stage. The large standard deviation further may be another indicator that not all Fashion Follower engage at the highest level of the CBESC model on Instagram in the fashion context.

Instagram's high user engagement, from consumption over contribution to creation, shows the platform's great potential to tie tight bonds with the fashion community. Both standard learning hierarchy and experiential hierarchy are attitude formation processes that offer opportunities for marketers in the social media context and are favorable for brands, as cognition and affect are present throughout all engagement stages. Attitudes are persistent and resistant to change. This is why source and message factors have to be selected wisely and are of high importance from a marketing perspective, as they are the only direct external influencing factors on attitude formation from a business side (Hoyer et al., 2013). The existing consumer engagement with brands on the platform, confirms Instagram's high value for the fashion industry. This is why the move to a

shoppable Instagram profiles carries, besides a great opportunity, also a large risk to lose consumer engagement and therefore brand visibility. The possible impact on consumer engagement was empirically assessed, by observing the preferences of the three subcategories of the Fashion Follower group, defined in Table 2.

Table 5 shows further indications that the respondent group Fashion 1 has the highest interest in the fashion industry. As all responses show a standard deviation >1 , it still cannot be concluded that group Fashion 2 and 3 do not hold loyal fashion consumers. In the fashion context the overall reason why consumers turn to Instagram in a fashion context is to get inspired. Making actual purchases of clothes seen on the feed only happens in an irregular frequency. Group Fashion 1 was the only group to state that they sometimes have the desire to make a purchase of an exact good discovered on the platform.

Table 5. Characteristics of the Fashion Follower Sample Group (n=95)

Scale: (1) never, (2) rarely, (3) sometimes, (4) often, (5) very often						
	Fashion 1		Fashion 2		Fashion 3	
I take Instagram as a source of style inspiration:	<i>M</i> =3.9	<i>SD</i> =1.2	<i>M</i> =3.0	<i>SD</i> =1.6	<i>M</i> =3.3	<i>SD</i> =1.9
I buy clothes that look similar to the ones I saw posted by friends:	<i>M</i> =2.6	<i>SD</i> =1.2	<i>M</i> =2.2	<i>SD</i> =1.1	<i>M</i> =2.3	<i>SD</i> =1.2
I buy clothes that look similar to the ones I saw posted by bloggers:	<i>M</i> =3.2	<i>SD</i> =1.6	<i>M</i> =2.2	<i>SD</i> =1.5	<i>M</i> =2.8	<i>SD</i> =1.6
I buy clothes that look similar to the ones I saw posted by fashion brands:	<i>M</i> =3.2	<i>SD</i> =1.2	<i>M</i> =2.5	<i>SD</i> =1.4	<i>M</i> =2.2	<i>SD</i> =1.4
I search for the new fashion collection of a brand on Instagram:	<i>M</i> =2.7	<i>SD</i> =1.8	<i>M</i> =1.8	<i>SD</i> =1.0	<i>M</i> =1.6	<i>SD</i> =1.1
I have the desire to purchase the exact products I saw on Instagram posts:	<i>M</i> =3.1	<i>SD</i> =1.5	<i>M</i> =2.0	<i>SD</i> =1.2	<i>M</i> =2.3	<i>SD</i> =1.6

As the data displayed in Table 6 shows, all three sample groups on average show little interest in changing their engagement with the fashion industry if a shoppable Instagram is introduced. Still, they also do not show any favorable attitudes, such as wanting to follow more fashion brands or blogger, if they were able to make purchases directly through the SNS. When

looking at the entire Fashion Follower group, 37% expressed that it is somewhat likely or likely they might even stop following fashion brand or influencer profiles, if the aforementioned tried to make direct sales through Instagram. This kind of threat should not be underestimated by the industry and also not by Instagram, in order to turn the business service into a successful way to monetize the App.

Table 6. Tendencies of Behavior Changes Expressed by Fashion Followers (n=95)

Scale: (1) very unlikely, (2) unlikely, (3) indifferent, (4) somewhat likely, (5) very likely								
	Fashion 1		Fashion 2		Fashion 3		Non-Fashion	
How likely is it that you would follow more fashion brands if you could directly purchase clothes through Instagram?	M=3.2	SD=1.5	M=2.7	SD=1.5	M=2.6	SD=2.2	/	/
How likely is it that you would still engage with brands if they tried to sell directly through Instagram?	M=3.0	SD=1.7	M=2.6	SD=1.1	M=2.8	SD=1.7	/	/
How likely is it that you would follow fashion bloggers who tried to link directly to brands' web shops?	M=2.9	SD=1.5	M=2.4	SD=1.3	M=2.6	SD=1.1	/	/
How likely is it that you search for clothes on Instagram with the intention to make a purchase?	M=2.6	SD=1.9	M=2.3	SD=1.7	M=2.6	SD=2.0	/	/
How likely is it that you stop following fashion related brand or influencer profiles?	M=2.4	SD=1.6	M=3.0	SD=1.4	M=2.7	SD=1.6	/	/
How likely is it that you stop using Instagram if brands use it as a sales acquisition channel?	M=2.5	SD=1.6	M=2.5	SD=1.4	M=2.4	SD=2.1	M=2.2	SD=1.7

By observing the correlation of behaviors and desires expressed by the respondent group of Fashion Follower (n=95) visualized in Table 7, it is clear to see that their contributive engagement with brands and fashion bloggers has somewhat a positive correlation on their purchase behavior.

Further, since $r > .5$ can be considered a large positive correlation, the actions of having previously purchased fashion items that were similar to the ones seen on Instagram seem to create a desire of wanting to make direct purchases through the App.

Table 7. Correlations of Engagement and Purchase Behavior³

Fashion Follower (n=95)					
	I contribute on fashion blogger content	I contribute on fashion brand content	I buy items displayed by fashion bloggers	I buy items displayed by fashion brands	I wish I could buy products directly through Instagram
I contribute on fashion blogger content	1				
I contribute on fashion brand content	.6483	1			
I buy items displayed by fashion bloggers	.3974	.1853	1		
I buy items displayed by fashion brands	.2489	.2588	.7802	1	
I wish I could buy products directly through Instagram	.3407	.3407	.5632	.5696	1

Therefore, the introduction of the test phase of a seamless shopping experience on Instagram does not only respond to the demand of the industry, but also to the demand of some Fashion Follower who have displayed previous interest in purchasing goods visualized on their Instagram feed. The survey data therefore expressed that attempts to directly close the customer journey on Instagram withholds a great opportunity to monetize Instagram's services to businesses in a more successful and measurable way. The strategy on how to introduce this shopping experience should nevertheless be planned cautiously, as users' engagement with the industry may decrease, displayed by data in Table 6. A way to avoid scaring away or discouraging community

³ The exact wording of the asked questions can be retrieved from the data sheet provided in the Annex.

members could be achieved by designing the “tap to view” icon in a non-dominant way, so it is not too prominent in a user’s feed and does not create the impression of trying to push the viewer into making a purchase. Another option for Instagram to avoid consumer reluctance could be to offer the users the option of opting-out of the shoppable visualization of brand profiles. Like this, consumers have the power to consciously decide for themselves, if they want to experience an easier customer life cycle on Instagram. After all, users’ main reason to use the App is to interact with their private network, as the data of Table 3 and 4 revealed.

5. Research Contributions and Limitations

Academic contributions. This study contributes mainly theoretically to the academic research within the field of online consumer behavior, highlighting the consumer engagement with fashion brand related content on Instagram on the cognition and affect towards the industry. Further, it adds empirical insights on the validity of the CEBSC scale for Instagram. Last, it provides an outlook on how the currently tested business service changes are going to impact the consumer engagement with the fashion community through Instagram. With this two-sided approach, this research synthesizes extant academic research on consumer behavior in the social media context and adds empirical data, closing gaps to previous studies.

Managerial Implications. Social Media Marketing has and will continue to develop to be one of the most effective tools for marketers in a digital age; especially in the setting of the fashion industry, where visual communication and community spirit influence consumer behavior largely. For marketing managers in this industry a crucial decision step will always be choosing the right SNS and the most appealing content to gain consumers’ attention. The findings of this study provide a basis for taking the right decision in allocating a company’s workforce to the most promising SNS for the fashion industry, Instagram.

Limitations. Both academic and managerial contributions can set the basis for future research. New SNS with visual communication, such as Snapchat, are emerging continuously and allow faster, more situation based and therefore sole mobile opportunities to share content (Vaterlaus et al., 2016). These platforms respond to the very fragmented attention span of consumers in mobile ages. They allow deeper and constant connectivity between brands and consumers, forming tighter bonds than ever within the community. With Instagram's very recent move of testing its direct path to sales service, observation of actual consumer behavior over time will allow to state an even clearer picture than this study. The sole focus on the fashion industry may contribute to a very limited output from a business perspective, as other industries e.g. with less needs for visual communication may show significantly divergent results. By comparing the sample groups of the fashion community against non-fashion Instagram users, it is already possible to see the tendency in different consumer behavior. Nevertheless, the desire for purchase facilitation may exist in a non-fashion segment, if the consumers were asked the same question relating to a different industry. Also, looking at a clear defined demographic group (e.g. specific age group or geography) may lead to differing results, as these factors are known to be prone influencers in behavioral research (Hoyer et al., 2013). Furthermore, it would be interesting to investigate a potential correlation of sales conversion on Instagram and the level of consumer engagement with the brand. This kind of data can only be collected once Instagram expands the test phase of shoppable Instagram feeds with its 20 cooperating brands to a large scale. Fashion brands may find it useful to evaluate their success on Instagram's sales conversions compared to other brands in the industry or other SNS, therefore detailed research into individual cases offer also further research potential.

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